



Water Meter News

SPRING 2010

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER ON THE CITY OF LODI'S WATER METER PROGRAM



A 2004 State law requires all cities in California to meter water use.



Learn more about how the City of Lodi will meet the State mandate

Lodi's meter program ready to launch

State law now requires all California cities to issue water bills based on metered use

Most Lodi homes were built before 1992, the year water meter installations became mandatory for new construction. As a result, most Lodi homes do not have meters. In 2004, the State Legislature passed AB 2572,



which required water providers throughout the state to begin usage-based billing, and to install meters on homes built before 1992.

To comply with this State mandate, the City of Lodi is embarking

on a six-year program to install meters throughout the city and begin billing customers based on their actual water use, eliminating the current flat rate (based on the number of bedrooms) by the end of 2016.

If you own a home built since 1992, you've already paid for your meter. For the nearly 2,800 homes that already have meters, usage-based billing will begin in 2011. Before that goes into effect, the City will provide metered customers with comparative information, such as how much water they used and what their bill would be under a usage-based rate. For those property owners who receive meters

between 2011 and 2015, there will be almost a year of comparative

information so they can adjust their water use, if they desire, before usage-based billing takes effect.

Those property owners who don't want to wait for the City's

installation program to reach their neighborhood have the option of hiring a qualified contractor to install a meter in 2010. This option is likely best-suited for those customers who suspect their metered rate would be less than the flat rate. See the reverse side of this flier for more information.



Want more information?

Visit www.lodi.gov/meters for FAQ's and to download the Privately Contracted Meter Installation Guide and other materials.



Future City Council decisions

Adopt final rate schedule: Summer 2010



Privately contracted meter installation possible in 2010

Privately contracted installation

All residential property owners will be required to have a water meter installed by the end of 2015. Eligible property owners may elect to privately contract their meter installation, which must be completed in 2010.

Am I eligible?

Perhaps. If you meet the following criteria, you are likely eligible:

- You must be the property owner;
- You have not already paid for a meter (if your home was built in 1992 or later, you've already paid);
- Your water connection is in the front of your home. Side and backyard connections are case-by-case.



If you are unsure you meet these criteria, or believe your circumstances would allow you to have your own contractor install your meter in 2010, contact the Water Meter Program Administrator at (209) 333-6800, x2659. Otherwise, you can wait for the City-hired contractors to install your meter in 2011 or later.

Should I hire a contractor?

That is your decision. Those residents living in homes with many bedrooms but who use little water may find it to their advantage to install the meter early, and recoup the savings through lower bills based on low consumption. A private contractor's cost may be higher than the City's, though.

When can I hire a contractor?

When you're ready. Submit a "Notice of Intent to Privately Contract" to the Program Administrator no later than Dec. 1, 2010. All privately contracted construction must be completed in 2010 and accepted by the City by Jan. 31, 2011. Meters will be read as soon as they're installed, but metered billing won't start until after January 2011.

On average, no change in residents' yearly water cost



The cost to install a water meter will range from approximately \$300 to \$1,200.

Property owners may choose to pay this amount over seven years, with some low-income homeowners eligible for financial assistance.

Water meters allow customers to pay only for the water they use. While some customers will pay more and some less than they do with the current flat-rate system, most customers will see little difference over 12 months.

Details of Lodi meter program still emerging

Many of the basic provisions of the City of Lodi's water meter program have been adopted by the City Council over the past few years, such as when the meters should be installed, but some details remain.

Program rollout. The City's meter replacement project is planned for 2011-2015. The neighborhoods that will have meters installed first have not yet been determined.

Paying for your meter. Some Lodi property owners may not be able to afford a one-time payment for the installation. Because of that, residents have the option of spreading the payment over seven years. Residents may pay a lump sum starting April 1, 2011 through June 30, 2011. Residents who elect not to

pay a lump sum by June 30, 2011 will automatically be billed monthly for their meter installation. Some low-income residents will be eligible for financial assistance. Those details will come later in 2010.

Lodi's rates will be

comparable to other cities. Based on a preliminary water rate model, Lodi's residential water rates will be comparable to rates in Stockton, Tracy and Manteca. For instance, a homeowner using 2000 cubic feet a month (the average in Lodi) would pay about \$43.75, which is

between the current three- and four-bedroom monthly flat rate. In Tracy, the charge is 39.85 and in Manteca the charge is \$41.70. For half of Stockton, the rate is \$53.78. Unlike Lodi, the other cities are not collecting funds for groundwater cleanup activities. The proposed Lodi rates are "advisory" at this point.

Need more information?

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Document library, more
information at www.lodi.gov